

2. On certain New and Rare Species of Birds found at Rockingham Bay, Queensland. By E. P. RAMSAY, C.M.Z.S.

As some of my scientific friends are doubtless aware, I despatched Mr. E. Spalding, an experienced collector, to Rockingham Bay during October 1867, with instructions to procure as complete a collection as possible of all north-country species found in that and the surrounding districts, and particularly to obtain all the information he could respecting the Australian Cassowary (*Casuaris australis*).

The following, then, is a list of the most interesting species found in this locality, and descriptions of such of them as I deem to be *new*.

1. HALIASTUR LEUCOSTERNUS.

This species is common as far south as Port Denison; and a few stragglers have wandered down to the Richmond and Clarence River-heads, New South Wales.

2. ASTUR, sp.

Agrees with Mr. Gould's description of *A. cruentus*, but has no rufous collar. This specimen was accompanied by a young bird, just able to fly, and which coincides with *A. approximans* exactly. Total length 20 inches; wing from flexure 11, tail 9.

3. ASTUR APPROXIMANS.

The above mentioned young bird. There is no difference between the West-Australian and the New-South-Wales individuals of this bird.

4. ASTUR (♀), sp. nov.

Two specimens shot, both alike. Total length (of skin) 20 inches.

Whole of the upper surface dull slaty brown, lower part of hind neck brown. Wings above slaty brown; underneath white, except the tips of the quill-feathers, which are slaty grey; the basal portion of the inner webs of the secondaries and tertiaries barred with greyish brown to within one-third of the width of their inner margin; edges of the wings barred with brown at the base of the primaries. Sides of the head and neck slaty brown, the feathers on these parts being white barred and margined with slaty brown. Whole of the under surface white; the throat, neck, chest, breast, and flanks crossed with wavy bars of brown, broader and inclining to arrow-shaped markings on the breast and flanks. Upper tail-coverts and tail barred with blackish brown; underside of tail-feathers light slate-grey, the bars distinctly showing through on all but the two centre feathers; inner webs of all lighter, becoming white at the base. Bill jet-black, yellow at the base; cere, legs, and feet yellow, claws black; irides deep orange.

Total length 20 inches; wing from flexure 11·2, tail 8·4; bill, from angle of mouth 1·3, from the forehead along culmen to tip 1·6,

from cere along culmen to tip 1, height at base 0·9, width 1·2 (on lower edge of upper mandible); lower mandible from angle of mouth 1·25, width at base 0·5; height of upper mandible from tooth to cere 0·6, its width at tooth 0·4; length of the head and bill 2·8, width 1·6, tarsi 3·2; first toe 1·2, its claw 1·3; middle toe 2 in., its claw 1 lin.; third toe 1·3, its claw 0·8; hind toe 1 inch, its claw 1·4; ditto from base to tip in a straight line 1·1, along the curve 1·4, its circumference at base 0·6, height 0·25, width 0·2; all the claws are much arched, thick and strong; tarsi thick and very powerful.

Although this bird is in many respects like what one would expect to find the young of *Astur novæ-hollandiæ* (alias *A. rayii*), I believe it to be of a distinct species. It is true, and, I suppose, well known, that the individuals of this latter species differ greatly in size, and, as many will not admit, in the colouring of the females. As regards this last fact I have instances of grey-backed females pairing with wholly white males; and if the New-South-Wales birds are really distinct from the Tasmanian, it will be in the fact that the females of the New-South-Wales birds are frequently grey-backed, while the Tasmanian birds are never so. A very intelligent collector, from whom I have had some valuable specimens of eggs, Braisher by name, told me, a few days ago, that a pair of this species had taken up their abode near his farm, in the Illawarra district, and that he felt sure of getting a reward I had offered for their eggs. Upon my asking how he knew that they were a pair, he replied, that one of them had a "blue" (grey) back. Nothing that I could say would persuade him to the contrary; and he affirmed that he had shot scores of them. During the breeding-season, Rainbird, a collector at Port Denison, sent me down a pair, of which that marked the female has the back grey. On questioning Rainbird, he informed me these had mated, and, he felt sure, had a nest hard by.

Nevertheless I shall wait until I have obtained the young from the nest before I consider the points fully settled, both with respect to the *Astur rayii* and *A. novæ-hollandiæ* being one species, and whether the bird I have described above be their young or that of a new species. At present I consider it to be new on account of its strong markings, greater size, and much stronger build, besides having the upper surface brown instead of a shade of grey. It is, moreover, a heavier-built bird, inclining to *Astur* rather than to *Leucospiza*.

##### 5. ELANUS AXILLARIS.

The young of this species have the upper surface dull brown, wings and tail blue grey, shoulders black, and the feathers of the breast centred with a black line, which ends in a yellowish spot at the tip.

##### 6. PODARGUS, n. sp.

From Cleveland Bay.

7. *PODARGUS*, n. sp.

From Rockingham Bay, thirty-five miles inland.

Although at present I feel convinced that both these species are new, I do not feel equal to the task of describing them until I have compared them with those in the fine collection of the Australian Museum.

8. *PODARGUS PAPUENSIS*.

Only one specimen obtained.

9. *CAPRIMULGUS MACROURUS*.10. *ALCYONE PUSILLA*.

Length of bill from angle of mouth 1·3 inches, from the forehead 1; wing from flexure 2, tail 0·8, tarsi 0·25. Bill black; legs and feet greenish-grey. Total length 4·3.

11. *TANYSIPTERA SYLVIA*.

The furthest south that this bird has been found, I believe, is Port Denison. The females differ from the males in having the two centre tail-feathers shorter, and their outer webs margined (rather broadly at the base, and gradually becoming narrower) with blue to within an inch of their tips; shafts black above, white underneath; the feathers on the rump of many specimens are also margined with blue.

12. *ARTAMUS ALBIVENTRIS*.

Bill deep blue at base, separated from the black of its tip by a triangular whitish-blue oblique mark; some are without this mark—the base being waxy blue, and the tip black. Total length 6·6 to 6·9; wings 4·4 to 4·8; tail 2·7 to 3; bill, from angle of the mouth 0·8 to 0·9, from forehead 0·7 to 0·75.

13. *CRATICUS QUOYII*.

A rare and shy species, found among the mangroves.

14. *PIEZORHYNCHUS NITIDUS*.

Tolerably abundant in brushes near the bay.

15. *OPHRYZONE KAUPI*.

*Arses kaupi*, auct.

One pair of this very interesting and rare Flycatcher were all that were seen; they were obtained on the edge of a dense brush, some thirty-five miles inland.

In habits and actions this pretty species closely resembles the species of *Monarcha*; they are lively and active, like the *Rhipidura albiscapa*, but do not fan the tail like that species.

One peculiarity which seems to have escaped Mr. Gould's scrutiny is the enlargement of the eyelid into a narrow flat rim, crenulated on its outer margin. This rim, which is  $\frac{1}{20}$  inch in width,

and encircles the whole of the eye, is of a bright indigo-blue in the living bird, and gives it a very curious and remarkable appearance; this fact, added to the *unproportionably long hind toe and nail*, may, in some degree, help to decide to which genus the bird really belongs, or form sufficient grounds for the foundation of a *new genus*. If such be deemed the case, I beg to propose the generic term *Ophryzone*, on account of these peculiarities.

In one of my specimens, said to be the male, the chin is white, while in the female it is black; the upper tail-coverts are black, and the under white, in both sexes. The female, perhaps a young bird, has the feathers of the white collar tipped with black, and is only faintly marked with white on the lower part of the back and rump. In this specimen the black of the ear-coverts is joined with the band on the breast at the shoulders.

#### 16. MACHÆRIRHYNCHUS FLAVIVENTER.

Spalding was fortunate enough to obtain three specimens of this beautiful bird—a pair of adults and their young one. The female differs only in having the under surface paler, the back olive-brown, and the throat and under wing-coverts white. The young is similar in plumage to the adults; but in it the yellow markings are almost white.

*Male and female.* Total length 5 inches; bill from the angle of the mouth 0·8, from forehead 0·65, breadth 0·35, height 0·15; wing 2·3; tail 2·15; tarsi 0·5.

This species frequents the densest parts of the brushes. The specimens were obtained thirty-five miles inland, and were the only individuals seen, although the place was frequently revisited.

#### 17. PÆCILODRYAS SUPERCILIOSA.

Found tolerably plentiful as far south as Cleveland Bay. I have also received specimens from Port Denison.

#### 18. EOPSALTRIA AUSTRALIS.

The specimens of the yellow-breasted Robins obtained at Rockingham Bay differ slightly from the *E. australis* of New South Wales in the browner tint of the upper surface, in the deeper yellow of the breast, upper tail-coverts, and rump, and in having a longer and much stouter bill, and are probably of a distinct species.

Specimen from Rockingham Bay.	Specimen from Dobroyde, New South Wales.
Bill, from angle of the mouth . . . . .	0·75 in.                      0·65 in.
Bill, from forehead . . . . .	0·65                            0·55
Bill, width at base . . . . .	0·25                            0·2
Bill, height at base . . . . .	0·2                              0·15
Wing, from flexure . . . . .	3·3                              3·05
Tail . . . . .	2·6                              2·4
Tarsi . . . . .	0·8                              0·75

One specimen from Rockingham Bay has the inner webs of the

outer two tail-feathers margined with white. This is said to be a female, and is slightly smaller in size. I scarcely consider these differences sufficient for the foundation of a new species, notwithstanding many have been founded upon less, but for the present will defer the matter until I have obtained other specimens from the same locality.

#### 19. *CISTICOLA RUFICEPS*.

During the last two years I have been getting together a series of this species for comparison, from all parts of Australia. It ranges from Cape York to Adelaide, South Australia. The young males resemble the females in having the head and all the upper surface striated black and rufous buff. Adult males, with rufous head and rump, are frequently found with half-grown wings and tails: this is one theory. Another is, that Mr. Gould's *C. ruficeps* is the young of *C. exilis* or *C. isura*; and with this I am at present most inclined to agree. My specimens throw no light on the subject, save that I have no examples of the rufous-headed and rumped birds with *long, or fully grown tails*, while I have specimens of the same with short tails and a few striated feathers on the crown. I believe *C. ruficeps* of Mr. Gould to be *the young*, and perhaps the *young male alone* of the striated birds, which may be either *Cisticola exilis*, *C. isura*, or *C. lineocapilla*, Mr. Gould's descriptions (?) of each being referable to the striated females of *C. ruficeps*.

The size of *Cisticola ruficeps* varies according to the age of the bird, the young ones with short tails being only 2 inches, the striated adults 4·7 (including their long tail), rufous-headed males 4·5 inches; so that no specific value can be placed on measurements of the tails. The wings differ by  $\frac{1}{10}$  inch, and the bills by  $\frac{1}{20}$  inch.

The nest of *C. ruficeps* is a neat, round, cup-shaped structure, composed of grass, hair, interwoven with cobweb, and half suspended by the branches and stems of grass and weeds amongst which it is placed. The eggs are three in number, light blue blotched and dotted with dull reddish brown.

#### 20. *CHLAMYDODERA NUCHALIS*.

#### 21. *MIMETA FLAVOCINCTA*.

#### 22. *SPHECOTHERES FLAVIVENTRIS*.

#### 23. *CALORNIS METALLICA*.

#### 24. *GLICIPHILA SUBFASCIATA*, sp. nov.

*Female*. Total length 4·8 inches; bill, from the angle of the mouth 0·6, from forehead 0·5, width at base 0·2, across nostrils 0·1; wing, from flexure 2·5; tail 2; tarsi 0·65.

The whole of the upper surface, sides of the head, and neck glossy brown, a short oblique stripe under the eye white, feathers on the crown of the head centred with dark brown. The whole of the under surface and the extreme tips of the ear-coverts silvery white. The chest faintly barred with lines of brown, which join the sides

of the neck above the shoulders; flanks and under coverts of wings tinged with brown, under surface of the wing dark brown, the inner margins of the feathers whitish brown; bill and legs reddish horn-brown.

An egg taken from the oviduct is white, thinly dotted with black, 0·75 in length by 0·5 inch in breadth.

#### 25. *PTILOTIS VERSICOLOR*?

Young in half plumage; beautifully mottled, on both under and upper surface, with triangular markings of black and yellow.

#### 26. *ORTHONYX SPALDINGI*, sp. nov.

*Male*. The whole of the head, cheeks, and ear-coverts, the sides of the head, sides and back of the neck, the sides of the chest, and the shoulders jet-black. Wings above brownish black, the feathers broadly margined with dark brown; primaries and outer webs of the secondaries brown, lighter on the outer webs of the primaries. Chin, throat, chest, and centre of breast, as far as the abdomen, white; sides of the breast, flanks, upper and under tail-coverts, rump, and back olive-brown; base of the feathers and abdomen dull slaty brown; the tail, lower part of hind neck, and between the shoulders blackish brown; bill black; eyelid flesh-white; irides blackish brown; legs and feet brownish black. The tail is long and pointed, two outer feathers one-fourth less than the centre ones, the shafts of which are black, and much curved downwards, but not so much worn into spines as in the remainder of the feathers.

Total length (of skin) 11 inches; wing, from flexure 5·2; tail 5 inches; tarsi 1·9; bill, from angle of mouth 1 in., from forehead 0·9, its width at base 0·4, height 0·4.

The female differs from the male in having the olive-brown tinge on the upper and under parts of a reddish-brown tint, and in having the centre of the chin, throat, and chest rich deep rust-red, from which a triangular patch of white descends, lessening in width, over the breast to the abdomen; the rest of the plumage as in the male; bill black, irides blackish brown, eyelid flesh-white.

Total length (of skin) 5·5 inches; tail 4·1; wing, from flexure 4·5; bill, from angle of mouth 0·9, from forehead 0·85, height 0·3, width 0·3; tarsi 1·8. Legs and feet blackish brown.

*Remarks*.—This fine species was obtained in a dense brush about thirty-five miles inland, and is a valuable addition to our avifauna, being the second species of this anomalous genus (*Orthonyx*). Its much greater size and jet-black plumage at once distinguish it from *Orthonyx spinicaudus* of the New-South-Wales brushes, to which, however, it closely assimilates in habits and actions, frequenting the thickest parts of the scrubs, and obtaining its food by scratching among the fallen leaves and *débris*.

I beg to propose the specific name of *spaldingi* for this new species, after its discoverer, who has worked hard in the ornithological line for many years, and added to my collection many valuable and rare birds.

27. SITTELLA LEUCOPTERA.

Of this species I received only two specimens, which I suppose must be young females. They have the whole of the head, neck, and throat black; chest and remainder of the upper surface silky white, with a black stripe down the centre of each feather.

28. GEOPELIA PLACIDA.

Whether this species be considered a variety of *G. tranquilla* does not much signify; suffice to say that there is not the slightest difference of plumage between these two birds. The following are the admeasurements of both:—

*Geopelia tranquilla, from New South Wales.*

Total length	7·9 inches.
Tail	3·85
Wing	4·
Tarsi	·55
Bill, from angle of the mouth	·65
Bill, from forehead	·48 to ·5

*Geopelia tranquilla, var.? "placida," from Rockingham Bay.*

Total length	7·6 inches.
Tail	3·85
Wing	4·
Tarsi	·53
Bill, from angle of the mouth	·6
Bill, from forehead	·46 to ·5

29. MEGALOPREPIA MAGNIFICA, var. ASSIMILIS.

A smaller race than the New-South-Wales birds, but identical in plumage.

30. ARDEA SUMATRANA.

A fine pair of adults, accompanied by their young one, were obtained, the latter in an extremely interesting stage of plumage. The whole of the upper surface dark bluish slate-colour, each feather, with the exception of the primaries, secondaries, tertiaries, and tail-feathers, broadly tipped with chestnut; the wing-coverts broadly margined and tipped with the same; feathers of the head and the whole of the neck dull dark slate-colour, centred and largely tipped with chestnut; chest, breast, flanks, and abdomen chestnut, the base of the feathers being dark slate-colour, under surface of wings (except the quill-feathers) and the under tail-coverts tipped with chestnut; upper tail-coverts dark slaty blue.

These specimens were shot thirty-three miles up the river.

31. BUTORIDES FLAVICOLLIS.

32. BUTORIDES JAVANICA.

33. ARDETTA PUSILLA.

34. *PARRA GALLINACEA*.35. *ERYTHRA QUADRISTRIGATA* ♀.

An egg taken from the oviduct of this specimen is of a dirty greenish white, the ground-colour almost obscured by dots, spots, and a few blotches of brownish red and yellowish brown, many of the larger markings appearing beneath the surface; length 1·08 by ·86.

36. *CHLAMYDOCHEN JUBATA*.

Very scarce at Rockingham Bay.

37. *NETTAPUS PULCHELLUS*.38. *DENDROCYGNA VAGANS*.39. *ANOUS STOLIDUS*.

Caught on the yard-arm of the ship, while off Port Curtiss.

40. *CASUARIUS AUSTRALIS*.

I regret extremely that, although Cassowaries were seen on several occasions, none were obtained. The black troopers accompanied Spalding on many occasions in search of them; but although the birds were seen they could not be got at otherwise than by lying in wait for them at dusk, which, on account of the hostility of the native blacks, could not be attempted without great risk of life.

## 3. Descriptions of Four New Species of Birds from Veragua.

By P. L. SCLATER, M.A., Ph.D., F.R.S., and OSBERT SALVIN, M.A., F.L.S. &c.

1. *PYRANGA TESTACEA*, sp. nov.

*Pyranga hepatica*, Salv. P. Z. S. 1867, p. 139.

*Testaceo-rubra unicolor, subtus clarior: loris obscure cinereis, alis intus fusco-nigris, extus dorsii colore limbatis: rostro nigricanti-corneo, dente maxillari medio distincto; mandibula ad basin flavicante: pedibus obscure corylinis: long. tota 7·0, alæ 3·6, caudæ 3·1, rostri a rictu 0·9, tarsi 0·85.*

♀. *Flavicanti-olivacea, subtus aureo-flava; pectore et lateribus olivaceo perfusis; subalaribus flavis.*

*Hab.* Veragua; Chitra et Calovevora (*Arcé*).

*Obs.* Proxima *P. hepatica*, sed crassitie multo minore, et colore saturatiore distinguenda.

In *Arcé*'s earlier collections from Veragua was a single skin of a male Tanager of this genus in transition plumage, which Salvin, misled by the prominent maxillary tooth, referred to *P. hepatica*. Several skins of both sexes of the same bird are in *Arcé*'s recent collections, and show that the species is essentially distinct from the northern bird. It differs in its much smaller size, in its very distinct maxillary tooth (which is as prominent as in *P. bidentata*), and